/The Tibetans/

*563 [197] [199] [648] [181] race, the Hsi-fans of the country west of T'ao-chao speak the Tibetan language and are as much Tibetans as the inhabitants of any other portion of the Tibetan plateau. They come into contact with the Koko Nor Mongols farther north, whom they bully and plunder. Unlike the Mongols, who are being pushed back everywhere along the northern borders of China by Chinese agriculturalists, the Tibetans of the Kansu border hold their own against the Chinese colonists. The northeastern Tibetans are truculent and independent as compared to the Mongols, and they take readily and successfully to farming.

[142] [291] [177] [516] There appear to be two physical types in Tibet, the short, round-faced Mongoloid type, and the tall Aryan type with prominent features. The latter type is common among the Tibetans of Amdo. The eastern Tibetan, even though he is in Chinese dress, may be readily recognized by his peculiar habit of standing with his feet turned out at right angles to his body.

[181] On the whole, these people are hardy, independent, and cautious with strangers, but they are also notably hospitable.

2. Patterns of living

*563 342 a. Dwelling

Like all nomads, the Tibetans have no fixed homes. They live in rectangular tents usually made of yak hair instead of felt, with wooden framework. The bottoms of the tents are made fast with iron pins or animal horns. Mud, stone or dry dung is built up around the tent to keep off wind and snow.

*563 342 352 353 The interior arrangement varies little from tent to tent. A mud stove is in the middle, a Buddha image at the left side. On wooden shelves along the walls are chests and boxes where food and clothing are stored. Skin bags of butter, tsamba or flour, and saddles and rifles also hang along the walls. Shelves on the right side hold pans, water buckets, kettles, bowls, cups, a stone mill and a few skin bags. Near the door there is usually a [237] [372] heap of dried ox dung for fuel.

b. Food

*563 262 [241] [489] Farm products do not grow in the cold climate and high altitude, and transportation is difficult. Thus there is little variety in foodstuffs, and eating and drinking are simple functions. The daily fare is beef, mutton and other domestic meats, fresh and sour milk, butter, cheese, noodles, tsamba (parched barley meal) and tea.

*563 264 There are no regular meal times in most households. In winter when the days are short, they may eat three meals a day; in spring and summer, perhaps four or five. During the day they [262] eat tsamba and sour milk. The evening meal is noodles with boiled beef or mutton, though the poor can have noodles and beef less often.

Rich and poor eat with their hands, though the Tu-kung (chief

3:Cable & French M-5 (1926) 1927
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733 simultaneously lit, the pipe produced, and the pillows spread for the wretched feast. This town might easily [443] be one of the most prosperous of Kansu, being the [237] centre of the lamb-skin trade, and at mid-January the merchants come from all quarters to buy the tiny, soft skins of the lambs, killed on the fourteenth day of their existence. Large sums of money change hands in Yungchang, yet all is consumed in smoke, and spent upon that which satisfieth not. The men are gaunt and [567] dishevelled, the women keep indoors for lack of decent clothing, and Yungchang supplies the slave market with its required commodity of little girls for the great cities.

167 We were leaving our inn one morning, when some Chinese called our attention to the fact that a foreigner, 'one of your own people,' was begging at the door. We found a crowd collected round a ragged Russian, who was begging his way to Peking. The road over which we were travelling was the *Via Dolorosa* of the Russian refugees, who, driven forth by poverty or unwillingness to register their acceptance of the Soviet rule, find themselves homeless exiles on the face of the globe. For some months before our arrival a great stream of suffering humanity poured down this highway, in every stage of poverty and utter destitution. Until the great war of 1914, the peoples of the East were under the delusion that race-solidarity, which in them supersedes the instinct of individual nationality (strong though that be), was also impregnable in the West. From this time, however, European prestige was entirely shattered; and the sight of homeless, penniless whites swelling the ranks of Chinese beggars, and of helpless women becoming the concubines of Chinese men, was a violation of their sense of fitness: nor have the common people ever recovered from the shock caused by these unthought-of proceedings.